

Message Text

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43

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

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P R 141659Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5626

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, UK, US, WB

SUBJ: CIVAIR - IGS FARE INCREASE

REF: BONN 445

1. PAA DIRECTOR RUNNETTE TOLD US ON JANUARY 9, HE WOULD LIKE TO INFORM PAA TRAVEL AGENTS WITH WHOM HE IS MEETING ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, THAT THE IGS CARRIERS HAVE APPLIED FOR AN 11 PERCENT FARE INCREASE. RUNNETTE SAID HE WAS ANXIOUS TO MAKE THE FARE APPLICATION PUBLIC BECAUSE EXPERIENCE SHOWED THAT SUCH NEWS WOULD LEAK TO THE BERLIN PRESS IN ANY EVENT, AND BECAUSE HIS AGENTS MIGHT FEEL HE WAS HOLDING SOMETHING BACK IF AND WHEN THE NEWS DID LEAK. THE LATTER HE THOUGHT PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT SINCE PAA WAS IN THE PROCESS OF RENEGOTIATING AGENTS COMMISSIONS IN THE LIGHT OF A RECENT IATA AGREEMENT. ALTHOUGH ACKNOWLEDGING THAT WE HAVE HAD LITTLE PAST SUCCESS IN KEEPING IGS FARE MATTERS QUIET, EMB CAA POINTED OUT IT WOULD BE TACTICALLY TO OUR ADVANTAGE IF WE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH OUR GERMAN AND FRENCH COLLEAGUES BEFORE THE PRESS GOT

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HOLD OF THE STORY.

2. WE, THEREFORE, INFORMED FRENCH CAA LASSUS OF THE PENDING APPLICATION IN ORDER TO AVOID A REPETITION OF AN EARLIER EPISODE WHEN THE FRENCH FELT THAT THEY HAD BEEN LEFT OUT OF US-UK DELIBERATIONS ON IGS FARE MATTERS. WE NOTED THAT PAST EXPERIENCE SHOWED THE AIRLINES WOULD PROBABLY FIND A WAY TO MAKE THE PRESS AWARE OF THEIR LATEST FARE INCREASE PROPOSAL. HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE MUCH NEATER, IN OUR VIEW, IF THE CAAS INFORMED THE FONOFF BCATAG REP (JIRKA) OF THE APPLICATION BEFORE THE PUBLIC BECAME AWARE OF A POSSIBLE FARE INCREASE. ALTHOUGH RELUCTANT TO ATTRACT PUBLICITY ANY SOONER THAN NECESSARY, BRITISH CAA GROVES RECOGNIZED IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE STORY BROKE AND AGREED TO SEEK LONDON'S APPROVAL TO APPROACH THE FONOFF.

3. COMMENT: WE DO NOT BELIEVE EARLY RELEASE OF THE FARE INCREASE STORY IS PARTICULARLY DESIRABLE; HOWEVER, WE THINK THE BEST WE CAN DO IS TO MINIMIZE THE DAMAGE BY EXPEDITIOUSLY INFORMING THE GERMANS. AS SOON AS THE BRITISH AND FRENCH ARE READY WE PROPOSE THEREFORE, TO JOIN THEM IN A LOW KEY APPROACH TO JIRKA STRESSING THAT NO ALLIED DECISION WILL BE MADE UNTIL THE APPLICATIONS HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY CONSIDERED BY ALLIED AUTHORITIES. HILLENBRAND

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